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Sixty third anniversary of Ecumenical Patriarch’s ordination into priesthood



Yesterday marked the 63rd anniversary of His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew’s ordination into the priesthood. On August 13, 1961, the young Dimitrios Archontonis, who would later become Bartholomew, received the first of the major orders of clergy in the Orthodox Church, being ordained as a deacon at the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Imbros.

Dimitrios Archontonis was born in the village of Agioi Theodoroi on the island of Imbros (now Gökçeada, Turkey), to Christos and Meropi Archontonis (née Skarlatos), both of Greek descent. He was the youngest of four children and as a boy, he assisted his father in their family coffee shop, which also served as a barber’s.

Dimitrios began his education in Imbros and later attended the Zografeion Lyceum High School in Constantinople. He then pursued theological studies at the Halki Theological School on the island of Halki (Turkish: Heybeliada) in the Sea of Marmara, where he earned his doctorate in theology. On August 13, 1961, he was ordained as a deacon, taking the ecclesiastical name Bartholomew.

From 1961 to 1963, he fulfilled his military service in the Turkish army. Following his service, Bartholomew continued his academic pursuits from 1963 to 1968 with

the support of a scholarship from the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He completed advanced studies at the Oriental Institute of the Gregorian University in Rome, the Bossey Ecumenical Institute in Switzerland, and Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. During this time, he also deepened his proficiency in Latin, Italian, French, English, and German. Bartholomew later earned a second doctorate from Rome's Gregorian University, focusing on the codification of canons and canonical decrees in the Orthodox Church.

Key Milestones in His Ecclesiastical Journey:

– 13 August 1961: Ordained as Deacon, receiving the ecclesiastical name Bartholomew.
– 19 October 1969: Ordained to the Priesthood.
– 25 December 1973: Consecrated as Bishop and appointed Metropolitan of Philadelphia (Asia Minor).
– 14 January 1990: Enthroned as Metropolitan of Chalcedon.
– 22 October 1991: Elected as the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome, and Ecumenical Patriarch.
– 2 November 1991: Enthroned in the Patriarchal Cathedral in the Phanar.

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